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REMARKS

The present response is intended to be fully responsive to all points of objection and/or rejection raised by the Examiner and is believed to place the application in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicants assert that the present invention is new, non-obvious and useful. Prompt consideration and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Status of Claims

Claims 1 - 14 are pending in the application. Claims 7 - 10 have been allowed. Claims 1 - 6 and 11 - 14 have been rejected. Claims 1, 4 and 5 have been amended to address the formal matters raised by the Examiner. Other amendments to claims 1 and 5 were made voluntarily to define more precisely the invention being claimed. Claims 6, 11 and 14 have been amended voluntarily to define more precisely the invention being claimed. These amendments are not being made for reasons of patentability. Applicants respectfully assert that the amendments do not add new matter.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the allowance of claims 7 - 10.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

In the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to Claims 1 - 5. Claims 1 and 5 have been amended to address the formal matters raised by the Examiner. Therefore, the objections to claim 1 - 5 should be withdrawn.

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CLAIM REJECTIONS

35 U.S.C. § 112 Rejections

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Claim 4 has been amended to depend on claim 3, as suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, the rejection to claim 4 should be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejections

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 11, 12, and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as being anticipated by Satoh et al. (US 6,102,595). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections in view of the remarks that follow.

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." (MPEP 2131)

Claims 1 and 6 recites: *"at least one of said guides is movable in a direction perpendicular to said surface so that its respective protrusion is positionable above, below or at said surface"*

Satoh does not disclose, either expressly or inherently, all the limitations of claims 1 and 6. As can clearly seen in Fig. 10, Satoh does not disclose *"at least one of said guides is movable in a direction perpendicular to said surface so that its respective protrusion is positionable above, below or at said surface"*.

Rather, Satoh teaches a sheet supply apparatus having a supply shaft 26 arranged rotatably above the sheet conveyance surface 24. A plurality of protrusions 36 is formed on the supply shaft 26 in an axially spaced relationship. These protrusions 36 are formed as lobes of configured rollers 38 each having a hub held on the supply shaft 26 and at least one lobe protruded from the hub. (see column 5, lines 34 - 53). The supply shaft 26, the roller 38 and the protrusions 36 are not movable in a direction perpendicular to the surface 24 and protrusions 36 are not positionable below the surface.

Claims 1 and 6 were amended voluntarily to define more precisely the invention being claimed by adding the limitation of *"protrusion positioned generally parallel to the*

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surface". These amendments are not being made for reasons of patentability as Satoh does not disclose, either expressly or inherently, a "*protrusion positionable above, below or at the surface*", as in original claims 1 and 6.

Original claims 11 and 14 recites: "*positioning guides within a platform*". Claims 11 and 14 were amended voluntarily to define more precisely the invention being claimed by adding the limitation of "*guides having a generally flat protrusion generally parallel to a top surface of said platform*". These amendments are not being made for reasons of patentability as Satoh does not disclose, either expressly or inherently, "*positioning guides within a platform*", as in original claims 11 and 14.

Therefore, Satoh cannot anticipate claims 1, 6, 11 and 14. Claims 3, 4, and 12 are dependent directly or indirectly from claim one of claims 1 or 11 and include all the limitations of the independent claim. Therefore, Satoh does not disclose, either expressly or inherently, all the limitations of claims 3, 4, and 12 and cannot anticipate claims 3, 4, and 12.

Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections of claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 11, 12, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) should be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejections

Claims 2, 5, and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Satoh et al. (US 6,102,595) in view of Noda (US 4,273,457).

An obviousness rejection requires a teaching or a suggestion by the relied upon prior art of all the elements of a claim (MPEP 2142).

Satoh has been discussed above with respect to claims 1 and 11, and that discussion is applicable here as well.

Noda fails to cure the deviancies of Satoh as Noda does not teach or suggest "*at least one of said guides is movable in a direction perpendicular to said surface so that its respective protrusion is positionable above, below or at said surface*", as recite in claim 1.

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Further, Noda does not teach or suggest, "*positioning guides within a platform*", as recited in claim 11.

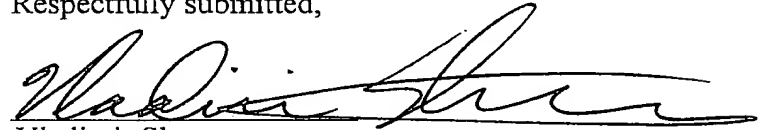
Therefore the proposed combination of Satoh and Noda fails to teach or suggest all the elements of claims 1 and 11. Claims 2, 5, and 13 are dependent directly or indirectly from one of claims 1 or 11 and include all the limitations of the independent claim. Therefore, the proposed combination of Satoh and Noda fails to teach or suggest all the elements of claims 2, 5, and 13. Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections of claims 2, 5, and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the pending claims 1 - 14 are deemed to be allowable. Their favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any question or comment as to the form, content or entry of this Amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below. Similarly, if there are any further issues yet to be resolved to advance the prosecution of this application to issue, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned counsel.

Please charge any fees associated with this paper to deposit account No. 05-0649.

Respectfully submitted,



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